

1 68. A method according to claim 52 wherein the guide wire has sufficient flexibility in a
2 direction of a disc place to be compliant with an inner wall of the annulus of the disc.

1 69. A method according to claim 52 wherein the distal portion of the guide wire is
2 tapered to a smaller diameter toward the distal end.

1 70. A method according to claim 52 wherein at least a portion of the guide wire is
2 actively steerable.

1 71. A method according to claim 52 wherein at least a portion of guide wire is
2 radiographically visible.

1 72. A method according to claim 52 wherein the distal portion of the guide wire has one
2 or more flat sides.

REMARKS

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version with markings to show changes made."

CONCLUSION

Applicants submit this Preliminary Amendment prior to the examination of this application on the merits. Since the present amendment does not introduce new matter, Applicants respectfully request its entry prior to examination of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: David J. Weitz
David J. Weitz
Registration No. 38,362

WILSON SONSINI GOODRICH & ROSATI
650 Page Mill Road
Palo Alto, CA 94304-1505
(650)493-9300

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the specification:

The paragraph beginning at page 5, line 9, has been amended as follows:

This application is a continuation of U.S. Application Serial No. 09/792,628, filed February 22, 2001, which [This application] claims the priority of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/185,221 filed on February 25, 2000, [entitled "Apparatus And Method For Accessing And Performing A Function Within An Intervertebral Disc." The above application is hereby incorporated herein by reference.] which are fully incorporated by reference herein.

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